



eCaliberGroup

TRANSFORMATIVE TALENT MANAGEMENT



InterLIP EDI Framework Implementation - Final Report

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Background

eCaliber Group was tasked with supporting four Toronto Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) in implementing the newly developed EDI Framework. The framework sets the collective vision, describes the common values, and provides LIPs with areas of focus and measures of success to *set priorities for change, while still holding us accountable to each other and to our partners.*¹

The scope of the project included supporting LIPs to:

- Identify each LIP's strengths & gaps based on the seven key dimensions & sub-dimensions of the EDI framework
- Prioritize key areas of focus and develop a practical implementation plan for each LIP to align with the EDI framework
- Identify practical strategies & activities to address the gap in a one to three-year timeframe
- Develop a few key tools to measure the success of the implementation of the EDI framework across the LIPs
- Build the capacity of the team to support the successful implementation of the EDI Framework through an action-learning process

To achieve these deliverables, eCaliber Group facilitated a guided process of action learning with the implementation leads from the four **Toronto LIPs** i.e. **East, West, North** and **South**. City of Toronto - Toronto Newcomer Office participated in the process as an observer.



With tools and support from eCaliber Group, **each team assessed their current reality** using the measures of success in the EDI framework, **and collectively prioritized, planned and implemented one initiative.**

These "pilot" initiatives were used as foundations for engaging key stakeholders, creating alignments in teams, and building capacity in LIPs for future EDI planning and implementation. Reflecting on the process and the outcomes of these projects enables LIP teams to formulate recommendations on the key areas of focus moving forward and create practical implementation plans in a longer-term timeframe.

1. Toronto InterLIP EDI Framework (final, May 25, 2022)



Process and Outcomes

Between February 2023 and 2024, eCaliber Group facilitated **13 InterLIP EDI** implementation leads **meetings**. Each time the group met for 2 hours or 1.5 hours. In addition to that, the consultants provided on-demand individual consultations and/or met with LIPs teams and their managers - in total **14** times.

In between the meetings, implementation leads engaged a variety of internal stakeholders including their teams and managers and worked on specific tasks related to identifying LIP's strengths & gaps, prioritizing key areas of focus, and planning and implementing their initiatives. The group collaborated and met also outside of the regular meetings facilitated by the consultants.

To support the process eCaliber Group developed and shared the following key tools:

- Toronto InterLIP EDI FRAMEWORK - CHECKLIST
- Stakeholder analysis - Tool
- Design phase - EDI Initiative Planning Tool
- High-Level EDI Planning Template

Group members also shared resources and tools including:

- Equity Lens - An Equity Impact Assessment Tool - shared by City of Toronto - Toronto Newcomer Office
- NLS Anti-Racism Self-Assessment Tool Local Immigration Partnerships - shared by Toronto South LIP



EDI initiatives implemented by LIPs

1. Toronto North LIP (TNLIP)

After assessing the current reality, TNLIP identified a need to formally assess and document areas of strengths and gaps in existing EDI policies, tools, and practices among its lead agencies and Partnership Council members.

The goal was to conduct and report on the outcomes of a thorough environmental scan of EDI policies, tools and practices that took into account the larger context within which these practices exist and continue to evolve.

The hope was that the environmental scan could establish a common understanding of the current state and EDI priorities among members and ensure that future work builds on and leverages the strengths while avoiding duplication of efforts and working in silos which often occurs when agencies undertake EDI work in isolation.

Alignment with EDI Framework

- Conducting an Environmental Scan of EDI policies, tools, and practices among the members is aligned with the EDI Framework Dimension titled Capacity Building and the sub-dimensions of Knowledge Translation and Resource Development.

Activities

- Conducted a literature review of existing EDI practices, policies, and tools in the non-profit sector in Canada as well as the history behind and rationale for these efforts.
- Conducted review of EDI strategies, frameworks, and policies at the three levels of government that fund activities in the non-profit/settlement sector in Canada.
- Provided an overview of the local Toronto context in terms of diversity, the prevalence of racism, and the non-profit sector at the city level.
- Implemented a survey of EDI policies, tools and practices among TNLIP members.

Outcomes

- Environmental scan report which identifies and names the wider legislative, historical, ideological, and political context within which EDI tools, policies, and practices are being developed and implemented at the local level and serves as a catalyst and common ground for further conversation, establishing priorities, and taking action at TNLIP level.



EDI initiatives implemented by LIPs

2. Toronto East Quadrant LIP (TEQLIP)

After assessing current reality TEQ LIP decided to focus on developing an overarching EDI policy & capacity building. To achieve this, the team created a draft EDI vision document as a reference point to help develop an EDI policy for TEQ LIP.

Alignment with EDI Framework

- Developing an overarching EDI policy is aligned with the Dimension of Partnership Culture and Service Coordination, Community Engagement, Research Evaluation, Capacity Building, Advocacy & System Change, and Communications & Knowledge Sharing.

Activities

- Built team alignment around EDI priorities, identified gaps, focus areas, and priorities.
- Created TEQ LIP EDI Vision Document as a reference point to help guide the creation of TEQ LIP EDI Policy.
- As part of this process started planning capacity-building initiatives and processes.

Outcomes

- The process has helped build the foundation for creating a publicly stated TEQ LIP EDI Policy.

Learnings

- Trust the process.
- Small wins are also wins, don't underestimate them.
- Involve People, you are not alone.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work, especially in EDI.
- Count and draw from your team's expertise & knowledge.



EDI initiatives implemented by LIPs

3. Toronto South LIP (TSLIP)

After assessing the current reality, and identifying areas of strength and gaps, two main goals and objectives were chosen:

- **External:** Improve meaningful engagement of newcomers & further develop the application of knowledge.
- **Internal:** Capacity building on community-based research techniques & accessible knowledge translation.

Alignment with EDI Framework

- Community Engagement.

Activities

- Researched & implemented best practices.
- Identified barriers to participation i.e. provided child care, & honoraria.
- Committed to equitable community-based participatory approaches.
- Re-thought newcomer involvement vs. newcomer engagement.

Outcomes

- Addressed main barriers to participation i.e. provided child care & honoraria.
- Renewed awareness & commitment to equitable principles to community-based participatory approaches.
- Reviewed & rethought newcomer involvement vs. newcomer engagement.

Learnings

- Build on these best practices & apply them to other areas of community engagement.
- Design a transferable model of meaningful engagement.
- Consider more creative and impactful means of knowledge sharing.



EDI initiatives implemented by LIPs

4. Toronto West LIP (TWLIP)

The goal was to strengthen a common understanding of equity within the partnership by stimulating the development of tools that can help assess current EDI capacity & common (mis)understandings, and facilitate the creation of a collective equity strategy for the partnership. To reach this goal a review of the governance documents using an EDI lens was conducted. The hope is that this analysis will lead to a much more explicit, pronounced, & documented EDI strategy which is currently absent from the governance document, specifically the Terms of Reference document. An Equity Impact Assessment of the Terms of Reference will help identify gaps, barriers, and support best practices within the partnership.

Alignment with EDI Framework

- This project will take into consideration the primary dimension of Capacity Building but is also intended to enhance the following dimensions of the Inter-LIP EDI Framework i.e. Partnership Culture, Community Engagement, Research & Evaluation, Advocacy & Systems Change as well as Communication & Knowledge sharing.

Activities

- Key priorities were identified.
- An EDI lens was applied to Terms of Reference documents fostering internal discussions.
- Amendments were recommended to the Terms of Reference document to rectify the lack of explicit equity language in the document.
- Amendments are currently being developed resulting in an Equity Impact Assessment & Statement to PCC.

Outcomes

- Identified gaps and areas for growth in fostering equity and inclusivity within TWLIP policies and governance structure.

Learnings

- Develop a more explicit equity-informed governance document that recognizes the importance of bridging the gap between theory and practice as well as setting a collective direction to enhance our strategic capacity
- Initiate conversation around collective capacity building and resource sharing around issues of race, gender, class and other forms of discrimination and prejudice
- Provide PCC with an equity impact statement Identifying structural areas for growth within the Terms of reference to create a viable, sustainable and effective governance structure that explicitly identifies its alliances with EDI goals and objectives.

Learnings from the implementation process



01 THERE IS A NEED TO ADD INTERNAL WORK ON ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES IN LIPS THEMSELVES

02 THE EDI FRAMEWORK NEEDS TO EVOLVE AFTER BEING PILOTED

03 CRITICAL FACTORS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS - DECISION-MAKING AND RESOURCES

01 THERE IS A NEED TO ADD INTERNAL WORK ON ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES IN LIPS THEMSELVES

When any organization starts to address EDI in general, there is a **need to apply a much more critical lens to internal policies and practices to identify systemic inequities within the organization**. This internal work is imperative to take place at the same time as teams such as LIP are trying to address the systemic inequities impacting the stakeholders in the settlement sector. In light of this, the first measure of success stated in the LIP's EDI framework: "Publicly stated policy commitment to EDI is made including an acknowledgement that systemic and direct discrimination exists within LIPs" is a powerful way to start.

This means that all LIPs need to acknowledge that there are systemic inequities in themselves and include internal EDI as a priority in their EDI work. They need to add specific priorities and actions related to identifying and addressing systemic barriers that result in inequities within LIPs. This can include initiatives that can aim to improve on areas related to LIP staff:

- **Job security**
- **Compensation**
- Opportunities for **advancement** (e.g clear career paths, professional development)
- Building a **culture** that focuses on health and wellbeing
- The rate of **turnover** among staff

Additionally, there is a need to provide consistency of practices and policies within teams in each LIP to **ensure fairness** and **adhere to the EDI standards and promising practices** 2. The structure of LIP organizations poses a unique challenge and demands specific approaches. Currently, each LIP has a team composed of members housed in various agencies that have different policies, rules, and compensation structures. This creates a situation where employees doing the same job have different salaries and flexibility around remote work e.g. one team member can work from home three days a week while another person in the same team has this option for only one day a week. Creating a culture that focuses on employees' wellbeing and aims to be flexible across the organizations can address these issues.

Internal EDI work is especially critical in Toronto's settlement sector, which LIPs are part of. This sector employs women, immigrants, refugees, and racialized individuals at a disproportionately high rate. For example, according to a 2006 study, 86% of workers in the sector are women, 75% immigrated to Canada, and 63% are racialized 3. Internal EDI work is directly connected to achieving Toronto's InterLIP vision.

2. For examples of EDI standards see resources such as *Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World* © 2021 Yvonne (Nene) Kegomoditswe Molefi, Julie O'Mara, and Alan Richter.

3. Family Service Association of Toronto and the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto. (2006). *On the Front Lines: Improving Working Conditions and Ensuring Quality Community Services*.

02 THE EDI FRAMEWORK NEEDS TO EVOLVE AFTER BEING PILOTED

Creating and agreeing on a common EDI framework for LIPs has been a major milestone and has required a tremendous amount of work. In an ever-changing world, to remain relevant and effective, every framework needs to evolve. This evolutionary process starts once the framework is piloted. The process presents an opportunity not only for improvement of the framework itself but also for stakeholder engagement, building trust which is critical for change, awareness of EDI work and priorities, and organizational action learning. In this iterative manner, the individuals as well as the organization can build capacity over time.

An equitable consultation or co-creation process should be designed so LIP staff, partners, and newcomers have ample opportunity to impact the following elements of the framework meaningfully:

- **Vision and values**
 - Overtime these foundational elements can be further defined and refined based on the input from diverse stakeholders and learnings
- **The priorities set** - dimensions, subdimensions, and measures of success
 - What is missing in the framework?
 - What should be removed as it is outside of LIPs control?
- **Raising awareness** about the framework and **effectively communicating EDI work**

03 CRITICAL FACTORS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS - DECISION-MAKING AND RESOURCES

For any future EDI work, initiative and/or projects the following elements should be considered when putting an implementation team together:

- Recognizing power imbalances in society in general and organizations specifically, there need to be clear processes that ensure that the **voices of marginalized employees are heard** and considered in identifying & addressing priorities. It would be important to research and implement selected promising practices in inclusive and equitable decision-making processes which incorporate the voices of marginalized employees.
- To maximize effectiveness, the implementation leads need to be **given the resources needed** - time, budget, and latitude to take the necessary steps to complete the project.
- Defining clear **EDI outcomes**, setting up **accountabilities** and creating a process for continuous **evaluation** of identified goals and outcomes is a critical factor in moving EDI forward.

Future directions

Considering the learnings from the implementation process, the following draft high-level priorities have been identified:

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
InterLIP	<p>Adding internal EDI work to the framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify key inequitable and inconsistent practices & policies • identify systemic barriers to address the above elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing some of the barriers to advancement e.g. lack of access to training & opportunities • Pay Equity Audit • Developing a high-level plan to address pay equity audit results over time
TEQLIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a foundation to create a publicly stated TEQ LIP EDI policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a publicly stated TEQ LIP EDI policy
TWLIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement NLS Self-assessment tool • Co-design anti-oppression training catered to our partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Newcomer Council in Toronto-West LIP • Initiate Research project that assesses TWLIP partnership EDI capacities

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
TSLIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the NLS-AR Self-Assessment tool in our team. Identify our gaps and areas of growth and find ways to strengthen our capacity • Once we identify best practices for newcomer engagement, draft a framework that reflects them, ensuring transferability across contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize activities based on the results of the assessment in the previous year
TNLIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share findings of the EDI Environmental Scan with PC and receive input on future work 	

Appendix

Final Presentations, tools and resources shared

Final presentations by LIPs:

- [TEQLIP](#)
- [TWLIP](#)
- [TSLIP](#)
- [TNLIP](#)

To support LIPs in implementing the newly developed EDI Framework eCaliber Group developed and shared the following key tools:

- **Toronto InterLIP EDI FRAMEWORK - CHECKLIST**
- **Stakeholder analysis - Tool**
- **Design phase - EDI Initiative Planning Tool**
- **High-Level EDI Planning Template**

Please contact TNLIP at info@toronronorthlip.ca if you have questions about the tools

eCaliber Group contact

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